



**SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEWS RELEASE**

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Malibu Middle and High School Participate in Red Ribbon Week

Malibu Middle School (MMS) and Malibu High School (MHS) participated in this year's Red Ribbon Week. With the theme of "Natural High," the week-long events and activities encouraged students to focus on finding natural highs and their passions.

"We wanted to create more awareness and promote making good choices and having healthy lifestyles," said MMS counselor, Lorene Whitehouse. "We also decided to participate this year because the fentanyl crisis is a real concern for parents, and campus safety is a primary focus for our Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and our school community."



The week started off with all teachers showing Matt Bellace's video, *The Science of Natural High* and discussing with students the difference between a natural high students get from doing something they love and a high from drugs. Lunchtime was filled with activities to bring positive and healthy messages to students such as finding natural high and passion, creating a support network, managing stress, setting goals and believing in yourself. Additionally, morning messages were sent out to students reinforcing these positive messages, while daily emails and social posts brought the message home to parents.



Keeping in line with the theme of natural highs, MMS and MHS hired an artist who's "natural high" is chalk art. With the help of some students, the artist created a 3D chalk image of school mascots, the MMS manta ray and the MHS shark, in the quad.

"We hope students recognize that finding their passion and living their natural high is important to their overall happiness and a successful and drug-free life," said Whitehouse. "We want them to feel and know that they have a support network that believes in them and their ability to achieve their goals."

Red Ribbon Week at MMS and MHS was a joint effort put together by PTSA Malibu, MHS Principal, Patrick Miller, Whitehouse, teachers Chris Neier and Diana Martinez, as well as

Brent's Club, which is a Malibu Boys & Girls Club program dedicated to encouraging students to make healthy and drug-free choices.

“The significance of Red Ribbon Week was not only to create drug prevention awareness and to get information out to our students and community about the dangers of drug use, but to get people talking and working on activities that will help rebuild a sense of community,” said Whitehouse.

The national Red Ribbon campaign was started in 1980 to lead and support families and communities in nurturing the full potential of healthy, drug free youth. www.redribbon.org.



Written by Diana Bouchaaya, Communications Specialist

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